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**NEWS From:**

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**Congressman Mike Honda**

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**FIFTEENTH DISTRICT - CALIFORNIA**

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**Embargoed Until 9 AM 5/18/02**

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May 17, 2002

## **Honda's Student Advisory Committee to Present Report on Tolerance and Diversity in CA-15 Schools**

*South Bay Students Share Findings on Tolerance in our Schools with Officials, Community Leaders*

**Santa Clara, CA**—Today a panel of area high school students formed by Silicon Valley Member of Congress Mike Honda (D-San Jose) shared their findings on the state of tolerance and diversity in high schools within California's 15th Congressional District at a special community meeting before Honda, members of the Santa Clara City Council and other local elected officials. Congressman Mike Honda established the 15th Congressional District Student Advisory Committee (SAC) in October of 2001 to bring together a diverse and dynamic group of motivated high school students whose goal was to identify and discuss key education issues confronting South Bay students and schools and to collaborate on possible solutions to these issues.

**"As a former educator, maintaining an active dialogue with South Bay students while fighting for our schools in Congress is one of my top priorities,"** said Honda. **"I am very proud that these students, who represent some of the best and brightest of our South Bay communities, have chosen to successfully take on such an important and challenging issue that affects all of us."**

The 2001-02 Student Advisory Committee consists of 22 high school students representing 14 public and private high schools in the 15th District. The students range in age from 15 to 18 years old and have extracurricular interests as widely disparate as speech and debate, drama, instrumental performance, community service, computers and technology, and varsity athletics.

The SAC, which has met throughout the school year to work specifically on the issue of tolerance and diversity in 15th District high schools has chosen to investigate the effect that the attacks of September 11 have had on tolerance, diversity and social interaction among the student body South Bay and around the world. The SAC spent several months actively researching the current status of diversity and tolerance in 15th District high schools and explored the roles and responsibilities of different constituencies including parents, students, and school administrators. The group has also developed recommendations that may enhance and enrich the diversity of our local schools. To gather information for their final written report, the students interviewed education authorities, combed libraries and the Internet, and authored and tabulated their own survey of over 500 high school students in the 15th District.